

# Syria: Free Duma - popular councils and democracy from below

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Despite the intense and daily bombings of inhabited areas and the economic infrastructure of the city of Duma, revolutionaries have freed it from the domination of the apparatuses of the regime, its chabbiha and its blockades. The council elected by the population of Duma has issued a statement through which it has exalted our heroic people who have cleaned our city of all the services of repression (security, army, chabbiha) and blockades. It has made the vow that it takes responsibility for the administration of the city and the protection of public goods and private services by the state against theft, vandalism, fire and so on. It urged everyone to give any document relating to these services to the commission appointed by the Council to this end. Cooperation with the council of all is desired to make the city better than it was.

It should be noted that about 25000 km<sup>2</sup> of Duma was destroyed and the local council of the city of is regarded as an example of the democratic experience of the Syrian people implemented in several liberated areas. This city, inhabited by more than half a million souls, has been divided into regional and neighbourhoods committees. Here are the details:

(1) The city of Duma is divided into twelve geographic regions. In each zone a neighbourhood committee has been formed consisting of five members and a chair is chosen for each committee.

(2) Twelve specific committees composed of five members are put in place, each concerning medicine, protection of the districts, public and private property, technical services, finance, judicial legitimacy, upgrading and reconstruction, the peace movement and demonstrations, public relations, information board, culture and education, documentation and the secretariat.

(3) The local Council is made up as follows:

12 members, chairpersons of district committees

12 members, chairs of specific committees

The president of the Council

(4) The chair of the Executive Board consisting of eleven members is elected.

(5) A free forum of the city of Duma has been set up, which meets twice a week on Wednesdays and Sundays for all questions concerning the city.

(6) The Information Bureau of the city of Duma has been established which will relay information on the city. You can integrate it immediately and send us your comments.

Notes: the committee, council and bureau members agree on the following conditions and principles:

(1) The member must support the fall of the corrupt dictatorial regime and the establishment of a

civilian, democratic state, based on the revocability of mandates and work to this end.

(2) The member must be an activist or supporter of the revolution, in any capacity whatsoever.

(3) The member must be moderate and non-fanatical, whatever their party, religion, confession, or point of identification within the revolution.

(4) The member must be trustworthy and noticed for good and moral conduct.

(5) Membership of the council or committees is a matter of public record.

(6) The mission of the committees and the board is to manage the life of the city to the best in an institutional way.

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**P.S.**

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\* Translation from the Arabic by Luiza Toscane and from the French by International Viewpoint <http://www.internationalviewpoint.org/>.